

In the Specification:

Please replace paragraph [0006] with the following paragraph.

Figure 1 is a ~~photograph showing~~ perspective view of the assembled coupler lock of the present invention showing the shaft inserted into the lock body of the coupler lock and a key inserted into the keyway of the coupler lock;

Please replace paragraph [0022] with the following paragraph.

Figure 1 is a ~~photograph showing~~ a perspective view of the assembled coupler latch lock of the present invention, with a key inserted into the lock. Figure 2 is an exploded view of the coupler lock of the present invention. Referring to these figures, it can be seen that the coupler lock 10 comprises a lock body 20 and a shaft 30. The lock body 20, components that comprise the lock body, and the shaft 30 are preferably made of stainless steel, making the coupler lock resistant to corrosion.

Please replace paragraph [0026] with the following paragraph.

A housing cap 45 is also fitted into the cap opening 42 of the lock housing 35. The housing cap 45 has a number of openings. One opening 80 is for fitting of the locking plate 70, springs 74 and cam 60. Another opening 83 is for insertion of the shaft 30 of the latch lock 10. The housing cap 45 holds in place the components of the lock body 20 which have already been described. The housing cap 45 is held in place within the lock housing by any of a variety of means known in the art. In one embodiment, the securing means [[85]]s a set of screws or rivets inserted through the lock housing 35 into the housing cap 45.

Please replace paragraph [0028] with the following paragraph.

The coupler lock **10** is operated as described below. The narrow end **94** of the shaft is inserted into an opening in the device **100** (e.g., the latch of a trailer hitch) that is desired to be locked or secured. The shaft **30** is pushed through the opening until it ~~can~~ cannot be pushed any further, normally at the point where the flange **92** of the shaft contacts the device **100**. The device is preferably a latch **100** of a trailer hitch **105**, the latch securing the trailer to a vehicle. A ball receiver **107** is attached to the trailer neck **105** and the latch **100** provides a securing mechanism. The latch device **100** is preferably in the closed position, meaning, in the case of a trailer hitch, that the trailer cannot be disconnected from the vehicle without moving the latch to the open position. After insertion of the shaft **30** into and through the opening in the latch **100**, the lock body **20** is attached to the shaft **30**. This is done by moving the lock body **20** to a point where the narrow end **94** of the shaft enters and is inserted through the shaft opening **48** on one of the sides of the housing **35** of the lock body **20**. The lock body **20** is designed such that the shaft **30** can be inserted into the lock body on either of the two sides of the lock body that has a shaft opening **48**. When the shaft **30** is inserted into the lock body **20**, the shaft extends through the shaft openings **83** in the housing cap **45** and through the opening **72** in the locking plate **70**. The lock body **20** is slidably moved along the shaft **30** until the locking plate **70** within the lock housing **35** is aligned and engaged with one of the recesses **95** in the shaft **30**. At such a point of engagement, the springs bias **74** the locking plate **70** into a position such that the edge of the locking plate opening contacts the bottom **106** and the vertical edge **102** of the recess **95**. Preferably, the lock body **20** is slidably moved along the shaft **30** such that the locking plate **70** engages with a shaft recess **95** that is as close as possible to the flange end **92** of the shaft. The coupler lock is adjustable for latches **100** of different widths since the shaft of the lock has multiple recesses **95**, each of which can engage the locking plate **70**. However, it is preferable if the lock body **20** is positioned at a point along the shaft **30** such that the locking plate **70** engages the shaft recess **95** that is located closest to the latch **100**. The tapered edge **104** of each shaft recess **95** provides a camming surface for the locking plate **70** such that the lock body **20** can be slidably moved along the shaft **30**, in a direction toward the flange end **92**, without the use of a key **39**. The tapered edge **104** of the recesses allows biasing of the locking plate **70** against the force of the springs **74** as the shaft **30** is slidably moved the lock body **20**. It is also possible to unlock the locking mechanism **50**, using a key **39** for example, and then slidably move the lock

body 20 along the shaft 30 toward the flange end 92. When the lock body 20 is engaged in a shaft recess 95, it is not possible to then slidably move the lock body 20 in the opposite direction along the shaft (i.e., in a direction toward the narrow end 94 of the shaft) in order to remove the lock body 20 from the shaft 30. When the coupler lock 10 is so positioned, the latch 100 of the hitch cannot be opened and the trailer cannot be removed from the vehicle. Figures 5 and 6 show the latch 100 of a trailer hitch in the closed position and the coupler lock 10 attached, as described above, locking the latch in the closed position.

Please replace paragraph [0030] with the following paragraph.

An advantage of the present invention is that the shaft 30 can be inserted from either direction, thereby allowing the user to insert the shaft through the housing cap shaft opening [[45]] 83 from either side of the coupler. This is beneficial in that the shaft 30 can be inserted from different sides and using different hands, thereby allowing for easy application of the coupler lock 10. The figures illustrate the variable widths available and the ability to have the shaft inserted from either side.

Please replace paragraph [0035] with the following paragraph.

In another embodiment, shown in Figures 8A-[[8C]] 8D, the receiver lock 10 includes a locking head 150 that receives shaft 30 along an end 152 of the locking head. The end 152 includes a protective covering 155 that is preferably an elastomeric material which snaps onto the end of the locking head 150. In other embodiments the protective covering 155 is integral, is made of a comparable material, or attaches by some other means, such as affixed by adhesive, form fit, or secured with retention means. In one embodiment, the protective covering 155 includes an internal groove that snaps into a corresponding external groove in the end of the lock head 150 to be contiguous with a cylindrical outer peripheral surface of the locking head as shown in Figures 8A-8D. As shown in Figures 8A-8B, ~~The~~ the protective covering 155 has a hole or aperture 158 that is sized to provide interference fit with the shaft 30, thereby sealing the internal components of the locking head 150. An aperture 58 is shown in Figure 8D as providing

an interference fit with the shaft 30. The protective covering **155** preferably provides a seal against the locking head **150** to ensure water and debris does not enter the internal portion of the locking head **150**. When the shaft **30** is inserted into the locking head **150**, the material of the protective covering **155** becomes compressed and provides a barrier along the shaft **30** as well as the locking head **150**, thereby excluding water, dust, dirt and debris from the internal lock mechanism. As shown in Figures 8A-8C, the internal locking mechanism includes a lock cylinder **160** which can be operated by a key or other mechanism. The receiver lock **10** may include shafts of various sizes, an end cap **170** or a bent or radiused end **172**, and an optional protective cap **174**.